

Application No. 10/059,547
Reply to Office Action of March 20, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-8 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-3 are canceled without prejudice, and Claims 4-8 are added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over King, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,893,318, herein "King") in view of Tomioka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,945,230, herein "Tomioka"). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over King in view of Tomioka and Dumargue et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,601,422, herein "Dumargue"). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over King in view of Tomioka and Bergue et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,933,951, herein "Bergue").

New Claims 4-7 correspond to original Claims 1-3, respectively, and are supported by the originally filed specification. Applicant submits no new matter has been added.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over King in view of Tomioka. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent Claim 4 is directed to an installation for shaping a part between upper and lower dies, comprising an enclosure defining a furnace. The enclosure includes a dividing wall separating two or more compartments inside the enclosure, a lower part carrying two or more lower dies, and an upper part carrying an upper die. The upper and lower dies are respectively located in the compartments. The lower part and the upper part are mobile relative to each other such that the upper die alternatively covers each of the two or more lower dies.

In a non-limiting example, Figures 1-6 illustrate that a furnace includes a lower plate 1, a fixed wall 2, and a mobile wall 3 forming adjacent compartments 12, 13, and 14 (page 3,

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lines 21-25). Two examples of a lower die 4 and 5, each containing a preform A and B, respectively, are horizontally moved by the lower plate 1 (page 3, lines 7-10). The mobile wall 3 is vertically movable and includes a roof 10 to which an upper die 11 is mounted (page 3, lines 12-17). Thus, the upper die 11 can move vertically such that the upper die 11 covers the two examples of the lower die 4 and 5, alternately, as they are moved horizontally by the lower plate 1. This configuration allows the next part to be preheated and/or adjusted in the lower die during the working of the previous part.

King discloses a press installation in which parts are introduced first into a loading compartment 54, then into preheating compartments 56, 58 or 60, and then into a press compartment where an upper die and a lower die are present (Figures 1-4). A movable workpiece clamp catches and displaces the parts (column 2, line 45 – column 3, line 30). King fails to teach or suggest a lower part and an upper part that are mobile relative to each other such that the upper die alternatively covers each of the two or more lower dies. Instead, King discloses that, enclosed in a vacuum chamber 22, the upper die 10 is mounted on a plunger 16 and the lower die 10 is mounted on the base 14 (column 1, lines 48-56). Thus, King discloses upper and lower dies that are integral with the enclosure and not mobile relative to each other. Further, King does not teach or suggest multiple lower dies nor movement of the multiple lower dies.

Tomioka discloses a press installation in which a pair of lower die and upper die assemblies stand on respective bolsters 2 and 3 (column 4, lines 13-22). Tomioka fails to teach or suggest a lower part and an upper part that are mobile relative to each other such that the upper die alternatively covers each of the two or more lower dies. Instead, Tomioka discloses that there are as many upper dies as lower dies and that the lower dies are carried by independent bolsters (column 4, line 13, column 5, line 43).

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Thereby, independent Claim 4 and the claims depending therefrom patentably define over King in view of Tomioka. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Addressing each of the further rejections, each of the further rejections is also traversed by the present response as no teachings in any of the further cited references to Dumargue and Bergue can overcome the above-noted deficiencies of King and Tomioka. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that those rejections be withdrawn for similar reasons as discussed above.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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